

Tobe Hooper:

An Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Hooper, Tobe, 1943-2017

Title: Tobe Hooper Papers

Dates: 1941–1983 (bulk 1967–1975)

Extent: 9 document boxes (3.78 linear feet), 6 oversize boxes (osb)

Abstract: The Tobe Hooper Papers document the creation of director, writer, and producer Tobe Hooper's first feature-length films, *Eggshells* and the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. The Papers include production notes, publicity documents, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, serials, and props along with other professional and personal materials.

Call Number: Film Collection FI-014

Language: English and French

Access: Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Gift, 1995

Processed by: Katherine Kapsidelis, 2015

Repository: The University of Texas at Austin, Harry Ransom Center

Biographical Sketch

Director, writer, and producer Tobe Hooper was born in Austin, Texas, on January 25, 1943. Hooper's parents were hotel managers who also owned a movie theatre in San Angelo, Texas, and Hooper became a fan of the cinema at a young age. He studied film at the University of Texas at Austin, and his early films included the short *Heisters* (circa 1963-1965) and documentaries on education (*A Way of Learning*, circa 1967), the demolition of a neighborhood home in Austin (*Down Friday Street*, circa 1970), and the folk group Peter, Paul, and Mary (circa 1970).

His first feature-length film was *Eggshells: An American Freak Illumination* (1970), an independent production that Hooper wrote and directed. Filmed in Austin, *Eggshells* was a mix of fantasy and reality aimed at the "bohemian segments of our society." The film won a gold award at the 1971 Atlanta International Film Festival.

Kim Henkel, a co-star in *Eggshells* under the pseudonym Boris Schnurr, would go on to collaborate with Hooper on his next film. Hooper and Henkel co-wrote a script loosely inspired by the story of the Wisconsin grave robber and murderer Ed Gein. Filmed with the working title "Leatherface," the movie would ultimately be called *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Hooper directed the low-budget production, which was filmed on a compressed schedule outside of Austin in 1973. It was distributed by Bryanston Pictures, and although commercially successful, the film's release was marred by financial disputes. Initially receiving mixed critical reviews, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was screened at the 1975 Director's Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival and has become an influential classic of the horror genre.

Hooper's long career in film and television since the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* includes the critically acclaimed film *Poltergeist* (1982), the television adaptation of *Salem's Lot* (1979), and the sequel *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2* (1986).

Hooper died on August 26, 2017.

Sources:

Macor, Alison. *Chainsaws, Slackers, and Spy Kids*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Muir, John Kenneth. *Eaten Alive at a Chainsaw Massacre: The Films of Tobe Hooper*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2002.

Scope and Contents

The Tobe Hooper Papers (1941–1983, bulk 1967–1975) document the creation of Hooper's first feature-length films, *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. The Hooper Papers include production notes, publicity materials, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, serials, and props related to the creation of these films. The collection also contains other personal and professional documents, including correspondence, materials from the 1975 Cannes Film Festival, and foreign film posters. The timespan documented in this collection is limited and does not encompass the entirety of Hooper's lifelong career in the film and television industry. The Papers are divided into three series: I. Films, 1970–1975, 1982, undated; II. Career and Personal, 1967–1983, undated; and III. Serials, 1941, 1966–1977.

The Hooper Papers, which were previously contained in a storage unit, arrived at the Harry Ransom Center with no discernable organization, arrangement, or (with one exception) labeled files. The collection was organized at the Ransom Center by subject, format, and importance, with items related directly to *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* separated from other professional and personal materials. All file titles (other than folder 2.9, where Hooper's title was retained) have been created by the Ransom Center.

Series I. Films is divided into two subseries: A. *Eggshells*, 1970–1971, undated; and B. *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, 1973–1975, 1982, undated. Subseries A. *Eggshells* contains production notes, film stills, slides, and publicity materials, along with a program and poster from the 1971 Atlanta International Film Festival. Subseries B. *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* includes production notes, publicity materials, photographs, negatives, slides, clippings, and props. Some documents in Series II. Career and Personal are also related to the production of *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and serials with *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* articles and advertisements are located in the Serials and Publications series.

Series II. Career and Personal is divided into four subseries: A. Professional Papers, 1967–1975, undated; B. Screenplays by Others, 1973–1975, undated; C. Cannes International Film Festival, 1975; and D. Personal, 1972–1974, undated.

Subseries A. Professional Papers contains career-related documents, including correspondence, slides, scrapbooks, and foreign film posters. The correspondence folder includes letters related to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, which is also documented in this subseries with other materials, as is *Eggshells*.

Subseries B. Screenplays by Others contains eleven screenplays in alphabetical order by the name of the writer.

Subseries C. Cannes International Film Festival contains publications and publicity materials from the 1975 festival. Although *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was screened at the Director's Fortnight, there are no documents in this collection that relate directly to this screening.

Subseries D. Personal contains documents, negatives, and photographs along with other materials that are not directly related to Hooper's career.

Series III. Serials, 1941, 1966–1977, contains newspapers and magazines, some of which reference Hooper or *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. These materials are in alphabetical order by title then by date. Some publications are incomplete.

The archive was purchased at auction and donated to the Harry Ransom Center.

Related Material

The Ransom Center holds the papers of Warren Skaaren, the first executive director of the Texas Film Commission, who played an important role in the production of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Skaaren's papers include a screenplay for *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

Separated Material

More than 950 moving image items and associated sound recordings documenting *Eggshells* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and Hooper's Peter, Paul, and Mary documentary, education project, and other commercial and documentary work were transferred to the Center's Moving Image and Sound Recordings Collections.

A Leatherface mask from *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* was transferred to the Costume Collection. Access to the mask is restricted for preservation purposes and available only with **curatorial permission**.

Savage Cinema by Rick Trader Witcombe (Bounty Books, 1975) was transferred to the Ransom Center Library. The book includes a brief commentary on *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

Index Terms

People

Hooper, Tobe, 1943 - .

Subjects

Horror films--Production and direction.

Motion Pictures, American.

Motion picture producers and directors--United States.

Places

Austin (Tex.)

Document Types

Black-and-white photographs.

Clippings.
Color prints (photographs).
Correspondence.
Film negatives.
Film stills.
Moving images.
Newspapers.
Posters.
Screenplays.
Scrapbooks.
Serials (publications).
Slides.
Sound recordings.

Series I. Films, 1970-1975, 1982, undated

Subseries A. Eggshells, 1970-1971, undated

Production notes, circa 1970 **Container 1.1**

Film stills, undated **Container 1.2**

Slides, 1970 **Container Cold Storage**

Atlanta International Film Festival materials, film pressbooks and small poster, 1971 **Container 1.3**

Poster, circa 1970 **Container osb 1.1**

Subseries B. The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, 1973-1975, 1982 undated

Production materials, 1973-1975, undated **Container 1.4-7, 2.1**

Slaughterhouse photographs, 1973, undated **Container 2.2**

Photograph negatives, film production and location research, 1973, undated **Container Cold Storage**

Slides, film production, 1973

Set illustration and Bryanston Pictures Pressbook, 1974, undated **Container osb 1.2**

Publicity materials and clippings, 1973-1975, undated **Container 2.3-5**

Ritz Theater Poster, 1982 **Container osb 1.3**

Publicity flyer of Marilyn Burns, undated **Container 2.6**

Photographs of Dottie Pearl [make-up artist for TCM], undated **Container 2.7**

Season's Greetings cards, undated **Container 2.8**

Small bones, undated **Container 4**

Series II. Career and Personal, 1967–1983, undated

Subseries A. Professional Papers, 1967–1975, undated

Parallel Productions Education Project, 1967	Container 2.9
Footage notes, undated	Container 2.10
Publicity photographs and film stills, 1973, undated	Container 2.11
Mona Lee Fultz, note to Tobe Hooper, resume, headshots, circa 1975	Container 3.1
Correspondence, financial documents, and other materials, 1974–1975	Container 3.2-4
Filmex 1974 program, promotional advertisements and brochures, 1971–1974, undated	Container 3.5
Deluxe general, West Coast Price List; Beaulieu manual, 1971, undated	Container 3.6
Screen Actors Guild, employee paperwork and agreements, 1967, 1971, 1974, undated	Container 3.7-9
Slides, 1971, undated	Container Cold Storage
Scrapbooks with film sequence photographs, undated	Container 4
Foreign film posters, 47, 1976–1983, undated	Container osb 1.4-5

Subseries B. Screenplays by Others, 1973–1975, undated

Bloom, Jeffrey. <i>The Arisen</i> , 1973	Container 5.1
Carson, L. M. <i>Kit. Double Eagle</i> , 1975	Container 5.2
Case, Allen and Bob Porter. <i>Character and Storyline Treatment</i> , John Hurd, undated	Container 5.3
Case, John. <i>Now I Lay Me Down to Die</i> , undated	Container 5.4
Fehr, Grant. <i>Spooks</i> , 1974	Container 5.5
Feigelson, J. D. <i>Final Printout</i> , undated	Container 5.6

Jackson, Donald G. and Jerry Youngkins. The Demon Lover, 1974. Includes correspondence and Finders Keepers zine, Winter 1973	Container 5.7
Lamb, Bernadette. Bury the Dead, undated	Container 5.8
Ritchey, Lloyd F., Jr. Night of the Electric Death, 1973	Container 5.9
Teller, Ira	Container
Death Machines, 1975	Container 6.1
Fear in Dark Places, 1973	Container 6.2
Subseries C. Cannes International Film Festival, 1975	
Cinema Australia publicity materials, 1975	Container 6.3
Cinema Canada publicity materials, 1975	Container 6.4
CinemaTV Today, Cannes 75 Festival Special, 1975	Container 6.5
Le Film Francais, 1975	Container 6.6
The Hollywood Reporter, Cannes Special Issue; Paris Côte d'azur, Special Festival, 1975	Container 6.7
UniCinema, 1975 (2 copies)	Container 6.8-7.1
Film programs and press kit, circa 1975	Container 7.2
Publicity materials, postcards, personal note, and other documents, circa 1975	Container 7.3-4
Subseries D. Personal, 1972-1974, undated	
Photographs, undated [Negatives moved to cold storage.]	Container 7.5
McGovern and Shriver campaign leaflets, clipping, 1972, undated	Container 7.6
Children's drawings, undated	Container 7.7
Programs, hotel ephemera, and other documents, 1973-1974, undated	Container 7.8
Reefer Madness poster, undated	Container osb 1.6
Personal effects: cigar (partial), airgun pellets, lens, rubber tripod feet, undated	Container 4

Series III. Serials, 1941, 1966-1977

ARX Literary Monthly, August 1969	Container 7.9
Austin American Statesman, Show World section	
March 1, 1970	Container osb 2
September 8, 1974	
September 29, 1974	
October 6, 1974	
October 13, 1974	
October 20, 1974	
October 27, 1974	
December 1, 1974	
December 15, 1974	
January 5, 1975	
March 23, 1975	
April 13, 1975	
November 2, 1975	
Austin Citizen	
October 3, 1974	Container osb 2
October 5, 1974	
October 12, 1974	
October 17, 1974	
Austin People Today	
October 1973 (2 copies)	Container 7.9
November 1975	

Austin Sun Newspaper

August 7–20, 1975

Container osb 2

October 2–15, 1975

October 24–30, 1975

Back Stage, March 15, 1974

Boxoffice, February 10, 1975

Container 7.9

Cavalier Magazine, April, 1968

Continental Film Review, circa 1975 (vol. 22, no. 9)

Creem, November 1975

Container 7.10

Daily Texan

October 10, 1974

Container osb 3

October 11, 1974

October 14, 1974

October 16, 1974

Pearl, December monthly magazine supplement, 1974

December 9, 1974

December 10, 1974

September 4, 1975

September 5, 1975

October 23, 1975

November 3, 1975

November 6, 1975

East Village Other

November 15–December 1, 1966 (vol. 1, no. 24)

Container 7.10

April 15–May 1, 1967 (vol. 2, no. 10)

Entertainment Today, November 1, 1974	Container osb 3
Esquire, March 1970	Container 8.1
Excalibur (York University Community Paper)	
March 13, 1975	Container osb 3
March 20, 1975	
Filmmakers Newsletter,	
January 1972 (vol.5, no. 3)	Container 8.1
August 1975 (vol. 8, no. 10) (2 copies)	Container 2.3
Films in Review, February 1973	Container 8.1
Free & Easy (Central Texas)	
September 15–October 15, 1974	Container osb 3
November 15–December 15, 1974	
Houston Post Spotlight section, October 13, 1974	
Japan Times	
March 2, 1975	Container osb 3
March 5, 1975	
Life, May 19, 1941	Container 8.2
LPO (Libertarian Party of Oklahoma) News, State Fair Special Edition, 1976	Container osb 3
New York, September 8, 1975	Container 8.2
New York Post, November 1, 1974	Container osb 3
New Yorker	
August 4, 1975	Container 8.3
September 22, 1975	
September 29, 1975	

October 6, 1975	
October 13, 1975	Container 8.4
October 20, 1975	
October 27, 1975	
Rag (Austin, TX), June 15-22, 1970 (vol. 4, no. 29)	Container 8.5
Sight and Sound	
Autumn 1975	Container 8.5
Spring 1977	
Texas Monthly, March 1974	
Time, March 3, 1975	
Variety (New York edition)	
May 8, 1974, 17th International Film Festival Annual	Container osb 4
May 15, 1974	
June 5, 1974	
September 4, 1974	
October 9, 1974	
October 16, 1974	
October 30, 1974	
November 6, 1974	
November 13, 1974	Container osb 5
November 20, 1974	
November 27, 1974	
December 4, 1974	
December 11, 1974	

December 18, 1974	
February 12, 1975	
August 13, 1975	
September 24, 1975	
October 1, 1975	
October 8, 1975	
October 15, 1975	
November 19, 1975	
November 26, 1975	
Variety (Hollywood edition)	
May 17, 1974	Container osb 6
May 21, 1974	
May 22, 1974	
June 5, 1974	
November 5, 1974 (Marilyn Burns' subscription)	
Variety, Anniversary Edition	
69th Anniversary, 1974	Container osb 6
70th Anniversary, 1975	
Village Voice	
October 13, 1974	Container osb 6
September 22, 1975	
Whole Earth Catalog, Fall 1969	Container 8.6